

History

Located on a plateau between two rivers and in the foothills of Mt. Rainier, Auburn Adventist Academy, a coeducational boarding school operated by the Washington Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, was placed amid dense forest in 1919 when it opened its doors as Western Washington Missionary Academy. Although a fire leveled the \$14,000 all-purpose administration building in 1921, the school continued to grow, using surrounding timber resources in the new buildings.

In 1930, the school's name was officially changed to Auburn Academy, and in 1971, to Auburn Adventist Academy. Despite the depression years of the '30s the Academy flourished under a balanced program of worship, study, and work. In 1938 the furniture factory was the major campus industry, providing employment for 80 students.

Enrollment fluctuated during the '40s with an upsurge following the end of World War II. Approximately 280 were enrolled in 1948, the highest enrollment of the decade. To accommodate the increase, South Hall, the girl's dormitory, was completed in 1949.

The furniture factory burned in 1942, was rebuilt, and burned again in 1951. In January, 1967, Harris Pine Mills assumed management of the factory and it continued to contribute to the Academy's excellent work opportunities until December, 1986, when it closed.

A large auditorium, seating over 4,000 was constructed on the Academy campus in 1958 by the Washington Conference for use during the annual camp meeting. During the school year, the auditorium helps to meet the Academy's recreational and educational needs.

A major construction effort which began in 1962 with the building of Witzel Hall, the boys' dormitory, resulted in the expenditure of over a million dollars and a southerly shift of the campus. South Hall was renamed Nelson Hall following remodeling in 1963 and the building of an adjacent chapel in 1964. Rudolph Hall, the cafeteria, was completed in 1963. Scriven Hall, the administration building, welcomed its first students in January 1965.

The Miller Aquatic Center, which includes a swimming pool with lockers, shower rooms, and physical education personnel offices adjacent to the school gymnasium, Rainer Auditorium, was opened in 1969.

In 1974, students raised a substantial part of the funds for a new industrial arts complex. A new music building was also completed that year.

For many years student and staff had longed for a sanctuary on campus dedicated to the worship of God. In 1979, a new church was begun. First opened for regular service in April of 1981, it stands as a monument to the cooperative efforts of students, staff, and constituents and their commitment to the spiritual priority at Auburn Adventist Academy.

Late in 1986, Harris Pine Mills of Pendleton, Oregon, since 1967 the mainstay of the Academy's student work program, declared bankruptcy. Plans to diversify and increase student employment opportunities were implemented immediately, resulting in a greater variety of student jobs as well as a greater number of opportunities. Auburn students may now work in packaging, assembly, and manufacturing.

Since the mid-50s, enrollment has fluctuated between 300 and 550 per year. Graduating classes have grown from a low of five students in 1920 to over 100 in recent years. The curriculum has been enriched to meet the diverse needs of Christian living in contemporary times.